

## 0802

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### 0802.05

### SCREENING AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

REV: ~~05/1997~~09/2006

Anyone may request information about the agency's assistance programs either by telephone, by mail, or in person. Authorized agency staff must furnish information to the inquiring person in accordance with the instructions in Sections 0802.05.05 through 0802.05.15. A request for information may be followed by an application for cash or another form of assistance.

All application packets offered to the public must include officially approved documents including application forms, informational fact sheets, program requirements and participant rights and responsibilities.

When a person expresses interest in programs that can be applied for entirely through the mail, such as Child Care Assistance and Rite Care, a complete mail in application packet will be provided either directly or will be mailed immediately.

When a person expresses a desire to apply for assistance from programs requiring a face to face interview, a face to face screening interview is conducted at the earliest possible time.

The purpose of the formal application procedure ensures an individual's right to apply without delay for assistance. It affords the person an opportunity to state her/his needs and to learn what the agency can do to help meet them. It also affords the agency an opportunity to apprise the person of her/his responsibilities in relation to the agency, both as an applicant and, if eligibility is established, as a recipient.

An applicant may be assisted in the application process, including completion of the DHS-2, by one or more individuals of his/her choice and, when accompanied by such individual(s), may be represented by him/her/them. However, the agency requires a face-to-face interview with the applicant during the application process.

#### 0802.05.05 Screening

REV: ~~12/2004~~09/2006

~~Requests to the Family Independence Program (FIP) case worker may be for applications for assistance or for information about applying for assistance. Such requests may come from different sources, e.g., in person, by telephone, by mail, or as a referral from another agency. Application packets are available to any person who requests one.~~

~~—~~

~~The application packet, which contains information about the agency, the applicant's rights and responsibilities, and the conditions under which assistance is provided, includes:~~

~~—~~

~~Application for Assistance – Part I (DHS-1)  
Statement of Need (DHS-2)  
Notice Concerning Good Cause for Refusal to Cooperate  
(AP-35)  
Literature on Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis,  
and Treatment (EPSDT) Program  
Statewide List by Location of DHS Offices (DHS-14)  
Other notices and/or informational forms, as  
appropriate (e.g., Motor Voter Registration forms).~~

When a request for information about assistance is received in the district office and the inquiring person expresses a desire to apply for assistance, a face-to-face screening interview is arranged.

The screening interview is one of the ways that an applicant can begin the application process for Food Stamps, FIP Cash Assistance, General Public Assistance and other programs, as appropriate. This interview is offered to applicants as a service to assist them in their choice of programs and services for which they may be eligible.

The screening interview is the beginning of the application process. The FIP screening case worker elicits the presenting problem(s) and the salient facts of the applicant's situation which prompted the applicant to seek the agency's assistance. The screening Family Independence case worker ~~then~~ determines whether any crisis exists and works with the applicant to resolve it by utilizing suitable DHS and community resources.

During this initial contact, the Domestic Violence Notice (Form WVR-1) is presented to each applicant. Every applicant must be informed that s/he may be excused from certain FIP requirements under the Family Violence Option if meeting these requirements puts the applicant or her or his children at risk due to domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Notice form should be signed by the applicant acknowledging that s/he understands the contents of the notice. After signing the notice form, a copy is given to the applicant.

If there is disclosure of neglect, risk, or abuse to children, immediate referral must be made to DCYF as specified in Section 0118. The procedures following an applicant's claiming of the Family Violence Option or disclosure of abuse are outlined in Section 0814.10.

~~The FIP case worker informs applicants about services and opportunities offered by the various assistance programs administered by DHS including Medical Assistance, Rite Care, the Child Care Assistance Program, Office of Rehabilitation Services, the Family Independence Program (FIP), General Public Assistance, and Food Stamps as well as other agencies and community resources which may be of assistance to the applicant.~~

~~Part of the overview of FIP is an explanation of the time-limited nature of cash assistance under FIP of sixty (60) months for adults.~~

~~At the same time, the FIP case worker evaluates whether the family is a likely candidate for an up-front lump sum payment in lieu of continuing FIP cash assistance. If the applicant family appears to be a potential~~

~~candidate for the Alternative Cash (lump sum) Assistance program, whose criteria are detailed in Section 0814.15, the case worker informs the applicant of this option.~~

~~—~~

During this initial screening process, the DHS-1, Application for Assistance-Part I, is completed to obtain the necessary identifying information. After the DHS-1 is completed, it is dated and signed by the applicant. The DHS-1 is date-stamped to establish the official date of receipt. ~~application filing date.~~

If the applicant wishes to apply for the Food Stamp program the DHS-1 is screened for Food Stamp expedited service. If the information offered on the DHS-1 indicates the applicant may be eligible for expedited service, the DHS-2 Statement of Need itself must be completed in full. If eligibility exists, expedited service must be afforded according to the processing standards located in Food Stamp Manual Section 1016.10.

If the applicant is unfamiliar with the DHS-1 and DHS-2 or is likely to require guidance in their completion, the ~~FIP- screening~~ case worker shows the applicant how to complete them and indicates what documentation must be furnished. At the same time, the applicant is advised that, if eligibility is found to exist, financial assistance may begin from the date the prepared and signed DHS-1 is date-stamped in the DHS district office.

When an applicant expresses a desire to apply for the Family Independence Program( FIP) the screening case worker must inform the applicant that:

- FIP is time-limited and that adults can receive cash assistance under FIP for a lifetime total of sixty (60) months and children may receive cash assistance until age 18; and
- as a part of the application process and a condition of FIP eligibility the applicant must meet with a FIP eligibility technician to determine financial eligibility; and with a FIP social case worker for a Family Needs and Employment Assessment; and unless exempt, the applicant must complete and participate in a FIP Employment Plan.

The screening case worker evaluates whether the family is a likely candidate for an up-front lump sum payment in lieu of continuing FIP cash assistance. If the applicant family appears to be a potential candidate for the Alternative Cash (lump sum) Assistance program, whose criteria are detailed in Section 0814.15, the screening worker informs the applicant of this option.

~~—~~

~~—~~

~~—~~

If the applicant decides to apply for the Family Independence Program, the applicant is given either a prompt intake appointment or, if indicated, an emergency intake appointment. ~~to determine eligibility based on the following criteria.~~

~~—~~

## Prompt Appointment

All applicants must be scheduled and such appointment interviews must be conducted within five (5) working days of the screening interview. For example, if an applicant is screened on a Monday, the intake interview must be scheduled as soon as possible but no later than the following Monday.

~~Any scheduling conflicts which arise are resolved with the eligibility supervisor in charge of the intake.~~

## Emergency Appointments

If an applicant indicates that s/he (1) has no available income or resources, and (2) during the current calendar month of application has not had and/or will not have income or resources in excess of the monthly Family Independence Standard of Assistance for the appropriate family size, the intake appointment must be scheduled within one (1) working day of the screening interview. If the applicant is unable to keep an appointment the following day, the intake appointment is scheduled for the earliest available time acceptable to the applicant.

For the purposes of determining an "emergency appointment", the ~~Family Independence case worker~~Screening case worker considers the family's income and resources including all of the applicant's income and resources and the income and resources of those persons for whom s/he is applying which would be counted in determining eligibility for cash assistance. Deemed income must also be included. Income and resources do not include the income and resources of non-legally-liable relatives and friends. Income which is anticipated in the month of application is counted only if it is reasonably expected to be received, for example, the next regular paycheck or receipt of a government benefit. If it is doubtful that income will be received in the month of application, it should not be considered for the purpose of scheduling an intake appointment.

An applicant who has been scheduled for a prompt intake appointment may have a change in circumstances which makes her/him eligible for an emergency intake appointment; s/he may request to be rescheduled as an emergency intake. The ~~Family Independence case worker~~screening case worker reschedules the appointment for the next business day. ~~and corrects the intake book.~~

~~Prior to the intake, the transfer of any electronic INRHODES record, as well as paper file(s), as appropriate, is accomplished as soon as possible. The paper record with the new DHS-1 is routed to the appropriate supervisor to assign the eligibility intake. A copy of the DHS-1 is returned to the Family Independence case worker and incorporated in the service record.~~

The screening caseworker also schedules the applicant to take a test of basic competencies in the areas of reading, math, and language skills. The screening worker offers the applicant the option of having the eligibility intake appointment and testing appointments on the same day or on different days. The results of the test must be available at the time of the FIP assessment appointment. As appropriate the applicant

is scheduled for an assessment of their education and employment history. The appointment is scheduled at the earliest date possible to assure that the assessment and Employment Plan are completed as part of determining eligibility for FIP.

Only the following individuals are NOT required to take the basic education skills test as a condition of FIP eligibility:

- a parent who has taken the TABE (or other comparable) test within the twelve (12) months prior to application, and the results are available to the case worker at the time of the Assessment appointment.
- a parent who works at or above 30 hours per week
- a minor parent living with parent(s) (minor teen parents as a whole, should not be required to be tested as a condition of eligibility; however they do need an assessment and they do get a plan which must be revisited as soon as this parent turns 18. Testing then becomes a condition of eligibility.)
- a pregnant parent at the discretion of the Department may be required, as a condition of eligibility, to take the basic education test. (The screening worker must explain to the pregnant parent that although they are not required to participate in an employment activity until their youngest child attains the age of one year the months that they receive FIP cash assistance are counted in the total of their 60 months lifetime limit on cash assistance).
- a parent with a child under age one at the discretion of the Department may be required, as a condition of eligibility, to take the basic education test. (The screening worker must explain to the parent that although they are not required to participate in an employment activity until their youngest child attains the age of one year the months that they receive FIP cash assistance are counted in the total of their 60 months lifetime limit on cash assistance).
- a caretaker relative who is not requesting FIP cash benefits;
- an SSI parent;
- undocumented parents;
- a parent/caretaker relative age 60 or older;
- a Parent who has reached the sixty (60) month lifetime limit for receipt of FIP cash benefits.

If the applicant indicates a medical reason for not being able to participate in work readiness activities or work, the screening case worker gives the applicant a Medical Evaluation for Employment Form

C1(b), to be completed by a medical professional. The applicant is instructed to bring this completed form to the Assessment appointment.

Only the following are NOT required to attend the Assessment appointment as a condition of eligibility for FIP:

- a Minor Parent living with parent(s) (as soon after eligibility is established a minor teen parent must be scheduled for an assessment appointment and the an employment plan which must be revisited as soon as the parent turns 18. Testing then becomes a condition of eligibility.);
- a Parent who is medically exempt from participating in any work readiness and **all** types of employment documented by a completed C1B; ) (as soon after eligibility is established a medically exempt parent must be scheduled for an assessment appointment to assure that necessary services are in place and set a reassessment date as soon as the exemption has expired. If the exemption is no longer applicable testing and the employment plan become a condition of eligibility.);
- a caretaker relative who is not requesting FIP cash benefits;
- an SSI parent;
- undocumented parents;
- a Parent/caretaker relative age 60 or older;
- a Parent who has reached the sixty (60) month lifetime limit for receipt of FIP cash benefits.

## **0802.05.10 Data Entry Requirements During Screening**

REV:05/1997

Using the DHS-1, the Family Independence caseworker inquires through the Person Search (PERS) function of INRHODES to find whether an applicant is known to INRHODES. If the applicant is known to INRHODES her/his program status and person information is displayed. If the individual is not known to INRHODES, or is closed, the Application (APPL) must be entered in INRHODES.

## **0802.05.15 Application for Assistance**

REV: ~~05/1997~~ 09/2006

The Statement of Need (DHS-2) is the basic document used in the application process through which eligibility or ineligibility for assistance is determined. The DHS-1 and the DHS-2, along with appropriate supplementary forms such as the DHS 2 Supplement FIP---, Cash Assistance Received in Other States, constitute the complete application for assistance. Families eligible for the Family

Independence program are also eligible for Medical Assistance without filing a separate application. The application also serves as the Food Stamp application.

The DHS-2 must be completed and signed under penalty of perjury by the parent(s) or caretaker relative (acting in loco parentis) responsible for the support and care of the child(ren) under eighteen (18), or between eighteen (18) and nineteen (19) if enrolled full-time in and expected to complete secondary school prior to the nineteenth birthday. At the close of the interview and upon completion of the DHS-2, the form must be dated and signed by the applicant and the signature witnessed by the agency representative in the signature box on the last page.

A new DHS-2 must be completed and signed if reapplication for assistance is made in a case that has been closed for more than thirty (30) days. A new DHS-2 must also be completed if a former recipient reapplies within thirty (30) days of closing and a significant change in circumstances (e.g., family composition) has occurred or if a redetermination of eligibility (REDT) is due. When reapplication occurs within thirty (30) days, however, a new Intake, including screening, is generally not necessary.

In an active case when a person, such as a newborn, is added to the assistance unit, a new DHS-2 need not be completed. However, the record must reflect through a CLOG entry and documentation of the birth date, etc., inclusion of the new member in the request for assistance. In the case of a one parent household that requests that a second parent be added to the case both parents must have an assessment appointment at the earliest possible date to assure that each parent has a completed and signed Employment Plan and that one parent in the two parent household is meeting the work requirements of a two parent household.

~~An application is the action by which a person signifies in writing to the agency administering public assistance a desire to receive assistance. The parent or relative with whom a child(ren) is living, or will live, ordinarily makes application for the child(ren) for the Family Independence program. An application is thus distinguished from an inquiry or a request for information about public assistance eligibility requirements and benefits.~~

~~For the individual to be considered an applicant, s/he must complete and sign a DHS-1. The application period formally begins on the date the signed DHS-1 is date-stamped in the DHS district office and ends with the agency's decision either to authorize or deny benefits. The stamped date constitutes the official filing date from which assistance begins if eligibility is later determined to exist and to have existed when the application was filed.~~

~~An applicant wishing to participate in the Food Stamp Program must be encouraged to file the DHS-1 in order to establish the earliest possible filing date for Food Stamp purposes and be screened for expedited service. If the information offered on the DHS-1 indicates the applicant may be eligible for expedited service, the DHS-2 Statement of Need itself must be completed in full. If eligibility~~

~~exists, expedited service must be afforded according to the processing standards located in Food Stamp Manual Section 1016.10.~~

## **0802.10 COMPLETION OF THE APPLICATION FOR ASSISTANCE**

REV: ~~05/1997~~ 09/2006

The Statement of Need (DHS-2) is the basic document used in the application process through which eligibility or ineligibility for assistance is determined. The DHS-1 and the DHS-2, along with appropriate supplementary forms such as the DHS 2 Supplement FIP---, Cash Assistance Received in Other States, constitute the complete application for assistance. Families eligible for the Family Independence program are also eligible for Medical Assistance without filing a separate application. The application also serves as the Food Stamp application.

The DHS-2 must be completed and signed under penalty of perjury by the parent(s) or caretaker relative (acting in loco parentis) responsible for the support and care of the child(ren) under eighteen (18), or between eighteen (18) and nineteen (19) if enrolled full-time in and expected to complete secondary school prior to the nineteenth birthday. At the close of the interview and upon completion of the DHS-2, the form must be dated and signed by the applicant and the signature witnessed by the agency representative in the signature box on the last page.

A new DHS-2 must be completed and signed if reapplication for assistance is made in a case that has been closed for more than thirty (30) days. A new DHS-2 must also be completed if a former recipient reapplies within thirty (30) days of closing and a significant change in circumstances (e.g., family composition) has occurred or if a redetermination of eligibility (REDT) is due. When reapplication occurs within thirty (30) days, however, a new Intake, including screening, is generally not necessary.

In an active case when a person, such as a newborn, is added to the assistance unit, a new DHS-2 need not be completed. However, the record must reflect through a CLOG entry and documentation of the birth date, etc., inclusion of the new member in the request for assistance.

## **0802.15 INTAKE INTERVIEW**

REV: ~~01/2002~~ 09/2006

The Intake interview is scheduled by appointment or plan. The DHS-2 is reviewed with the applicant, and the eligibility and need factors are verified through the appropriate documents supplied by the applicant, or if not supplied by the applicant, by obtaining the document or information. The applicant(s) is required to read, or have read to him/her, the statements in the Rights and Responsibilities page and the Declaration of Applicant/Recipient pages of the DHS-2, and sign the form in the signature block. In addition the DHS 2 Supplement FIP-Cash Assistance Received in Other States must be completed and signed. – The agency representative must witness the signature of the applicant(s).



The applicant is advised that if they received family cash assistance in another state that those months of receipt will be counted as part of the 60 months of FIP cash assistance in Rhode Island. In other words if the applicant received 6 months of family cash assistance in Massachusetts they will only be eligible for 54 months of cash assistance in Rhode Island. The applicant will also be advised that if found eligible that the 6 months of receipt in the other state will be subtracted from the 24 months that they can use for education and training programs and that they will have 18 months available for education and training programs.

The applicant is advised that pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws, Section 40-6-9, and without signing any document other than the DHS-2 Statement of Need, he or she has assigned any and all rights that he or she may have for and on behalf of himself or herself and for and on behalf of a child or children to the Department of Human Services against any parent failing to provide for support and maintenance of any minor child(ren) for whom assistance is paid by DHS. Additionally, DHS through the ~~Department of Administration, Division of Taxation~~ Office of Child Support Services Enforcement is authorized to act to institute suit to establish paternity and/or to collect support for said child(ren) who receives or received assistance from DHS.

The eligibility technician reviews the AP-35, the Notice of Requirement to Cooperate and the Right to Claim Good Cause for Refusal to Cooperate in Child Support Enforcement, with each applicant with children whose parent(s) is not in the home and obtains the applicant's signature. The Information on the Family Violence Option sheet (Form WVR-1a) is reviewed with the applicant. If the applicant relates that s/he wishes to claim the option or discloses abuse, the procedures the eligibility technician must follow are outlined in Section 0814.10.

The applicant is further advised that s/he must present the agency with personal identification, such as a driver's license, Social Security Number, birth certificate, or other form of identification.

Items on the DHS-2 are indicated as verified by the agency representative entering in red ink a verification mark (V) beside the item in the verification area of the DHS-2. The documentary source for each factor of eligibility and need is noted in the verification area.

If any potential resource exists, or further verification is needed, the applicant is advised of the necessary steps s/he or the staff member must take to obtain the information. S/He is advised that the agency uses, but is not limited to, on an ongoing basis, public records, other State agency files, such as State Employee records, ESB records, TDI records, State Income Tax records, Social Security Administration records, IRS records, and bank clearances to document the applicant's information.

However, the applicant is advised that s/he is responsible also to inform the agency of any changes in her/his situation such as income, resources, family composition, or other factors that affect her/his eligibility and/or payment level within ten (10) days, or as otherwise directed.

If the application for cash assistance is necessary by reason of accident, injury, or illness for which a third party may be liable, such applicant is informed that she has assigned any or all rights for amounts recoverable from a third party equal to the amount of financial and medical assistance provided as a result of accident, injury, or illness (see Section 0808.20).

All applicants are informed of the requirement of assignment and of their further responsibility to report a pending settlement which may occur during the receipt of assistance.

If such assignment is appropriate, the applicant is advised that eligibility to receive medical services shall continue to exist, although payment of medical bills shall be suspended by the Department and is not the responsibility of such applicant pending the settlement.

If outstanding verification exists and collateral sources of information must be used to obtain such documentation, the applicant is informed of why the information is necessary and how it will be used by the agency. If the applicant is unwilling to obtain further verification, or have the agency obtain it, the applicant may choose to have the application rejected.

If the applicant decides s/he does not want assistance and does not complete the DHS-2, the applicant is requested to sign the area on the DHS-1 confirming her/his withdrawal of the application.

## **0802.15.05 Forms Needed at Intake Interview**

REV: ~~01/2002~~ 09/2006

The forms and materials that may be needed at the Intake Interview are:

DHS-2 Statement of Need - should be completed prior to the interview if possible with the exception of the signature on the last page.

~~DHS-2 Supplement-FIP-20~~ -- FIP-Cash Assistance Received in Other States

AP-35 Notice Concerning Good Cause for Refusal to Cooperate - the applicant must sign the form when a child's parent(s) is absent. The original is filed in the case record and a copy given to the applicant.

## **0802.15.10 Review of the DHS-2**

REV: ~~05/1997~~ 09/2006

The agency representative reviews the DHS-2 and supplements for completeness, helping the applicant, as needed, to rectify any omissions.

Additions or changes are made, in red ink, by the agency representative, and the date and initials of both the applicant and the agency representative are entered on the page to denote authorization of the change.

Eligibility for the Family Independence program is based on both financial and non-financial criteria. In determining eligibility, the DHS-2 is reviewed and evaluated as described in Section 0802.20. In addition the applicant must be assessed for education and employment history and must complete an individual employment plan before eligibility can be established.

## **0802.20 COMPLETING INITIAL ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION**

REV: ~~12/2004~~ 09/2006

All items on the DHS-2 which were not verified at intake must be verified in the following contact through a source document in accordance with policies relating to resources (Section 0822) and income (Section 0824).

The eligibility technician gives the applicant the opportunity to clear up any inconsistencies or to provide any additional information needed to clarify or complete the information on the DHS-2 by whichever is the most appropriate method: telephone, mail, or an office or field interview. If the applicant is unable, either alone or with the help of the eligibility technician, to clear up any inconsistencies or to provide any additional information needed, the eligibility technician advises the applicant that it will be necessary to use collateral sources of information. If other sources must be used to obtain such documentation, the applicant is informed of why the information is necessary and how it will be used by the agency and plans with the applicant how this is to be done. Under certain circumstances, the eligibility technician must refer the case to the Front End-Detection (FRED) Unit for investigation before the determination of eligibility can be made. See Section 0112.10.05 for policy and procedures.

During the intake interview, the applicant's rights and responsibilities, as outlined in the DHS-2 are reviewed with her/him.

When the eligibility technician receives the Findings portion of Form WVR-2 from the Domestic Violence Advocate, s/he acts on the recommendation(s) in accordance with Section 0814.10, as appropriate.

Prior to authorizing eligibility for a FIP cash benefit the eligibility technician must also verify that the applicant, unless exempt, has entered into an Individual Employment Plan. The applicant's failure to enter into an Employment Plan by the end of the thirty (30) day period during which the applicant establishes eligibility for FIP cash, will result in a denial of the application for FIP cash assistance.

When the family is found eligible for both FIP and Alternative Cash Assistance as outlined in Section 0814.15, approval of FIP is postponed until after the educational testing, assessment, completion and signing of the FIP Employment Plan by the FIP case worker.

If after the completion of the assessment and FIP Employment Plan the eligibility technician is informed that the applicant has chosen standard FIP assistance, s/he approves the case in the regular manner. If the eligibility technician receives a signed waiver of on-going cash assistance, s/he approves the denial of on-going FIP and authorizes the lump sum.

--

~~When the family is found eligible for both FIP and Alternative Cash Assistance outlined in Section 0814.15, approval of FIP is postponed until after the evaluation by the case worker. If the eligibility technician is informed that the applicant has chosen standard FIP assistance, s/he approves the case in the regular manner. If the eligibility technician receives a signed waiver of on-going cash assistance, s/he approves the denial of on-going FIP and authorizes the lump sum.~~

The determination of eligibility and authorization of payment are completed as soon as possible.

## **0810.05                      ASSESSMENT**

REV: ~~01/2002~~09/2006

The assessment of family circumstances and employability for applicants and recipients is conducted by Family Independence Program case workers.

At the beginning of the assessment process, the Information on the Family Violence Option (Form WVR-1a) is again given along with a brief summary of its contents in case the individual cannot read. Every recipient must be informed that s/he may be excused from certain FIP requirements under the Family Violence Option if meeting these requirements puts the recipient or her or his children at risk of domestic violence and that s/he may claim the Family Violence Option at any time. The procedures to be followed after an applicant claims this option or discloses abuse are specified in Section 0814.10.

The assessment process begins with the Family Independence case worker using the Family Needs Assessment, FIP --, and the Education and Employment Assessment, FIP-to ~~collecting~~ collect information about the participant's past educational, training, and employment history as well as the health of the participant and her/his family. These and other factors provide a client profile which the agency representative evaluates and from which s/he can estimate the employment potential of the individual. This collection of data is appraised to identify the individual's strengths in relation to the individual's readiness for employment. The purpose of the appraisal is to gauge the overall likelihood of the completion and success in a given component/activity and achievement of what specific employment goal is realistically possible in the shortest possible time given the overall family circumstances.

### **0810.05.05                      Assessment Requirements**

REV:01/2002

~~In order to gather information with which to evaluate a parent's employability, an~~ The assessment interview must ~~be conducted which covers cover all~~ areas relating to the applicant's and the entire family's circumstances, including, but not limited to the following:

- \* Housing;
- \* Utilities;
- \* Food;
- \* Physical and emotional health (including special issues affecting the well-being of the family such as substance abuse and domestic violence);
- \* Child issues, ~~relationships;~~
- \* ~~Adult relationships;~~
- \* Education;
- \* Employment ~~.~~
- \* ~~Level of crisis;~~
- ~~—~~
- ~~— \* Motivation; and~~
- ~~—~~
- ~~— \* Coping skills, insight.~~

~~The initial assessment is completed for minor parents and pregnant minors by the ASSC case managers in individual interviews. Other applicants undergo a family needs assessment and an employability assessment for each parent.~~

~~At the beginning of the assessment process, the Information on the Family Violence Option (Form WVR-1a) is given and the FIP case worker should give a brief summary of its contents in case the individual cannot read. Every recipient must be informed that s/he may be excused from certain FIP requirements under the Family Violence Option if meeting these requirements puts the recipient or her or his children at risk of domestic violence and that s/he may claim the Family Violence Option at any time. The procedures to be followed after an applicant claims this option or discloses abuse are specified in Section 0814.10.~~

Specific assessment information needed includes the individual's ability to speak English, and if not, the individual's primary language, marital status, military veteran status, employment status, last grade of school completed, as well as each family member's school attended, as appropriate, current health problems, names of educational facilities attended by the participant: program/course titles and completion dates, names and addresses of the participant's previous employers, job titles, and hire and end dates.

The FIP case worker must also assess the financial conditions of the family and develop a financial plan. See Section 0810.10 pertaining to the financial plan.

As appropriate, the FIP case worker discusses the various special requirements for minor parents and pregnant minors, and for all adolescent parents who do not have their high school diploma or its equivalent and who are not attending school, the requirement for participation in an educational program leading to such diploma, as well as other Family Independence requirements. The initial assessment interview of pregnant minors and minor teen parents is conducted by the appropriate Adolescent Collaborative. -The Family Independence Program Information for Teen Parents sheet which summarizes these requirements is reviewed with and given to the recipient, as appropriate, during the assessment process.

~~For all adult parents, the FIP case worker informs each individual of the work activity requirements as well as the sixty (60) month lifetime time limit for adults for receipt of benefits from the Family Independence Program. The FIP case worker reviews the Family Independence Program Information sheet which describes the welfare to work process by outlining the sequence of the eligibility process and other compliance matters, activity requirements, the participant's as well as the Department's responsibilities, and the consequences if the individual fails to comply with program requirements.~~

For all adult parents, the FIP social case worker informs them of the work activity requirements as well as the sixty (60) month lifetime limit on the receipt of FIP cash assistance. The FIP social case worker reviews the Family Independence Program information by outlining the sequence of the eligibility process and other compliance matters, activity requirements, the participant's as well as the Department's responsibilities, and the consequences if the individual fails to comply with program requirements.

~~Assessment initiates the process of developing the individual's Family Services and Support/Employment Plan. The plan must contain the short and long term career objectives of the recipient, must take into consideration the (1) the physical capacity, skills, education, work experience, health and safety and family responsibilities, and place of residence of the individual; (2) local employment opportunities; and (3) the child care and supportive services required by and actually available to the recipient in order to avail herself or himself of employment opportunities and/or work readiness programs. The plan shall include a strategy for immediate employment, as appropriate, and/or for preparing for, finding, and retaining employment consistent, to the extent practicable, with the individual's career objectives.~~

The Employment Plan is developed from the data gathered during assessment; the plan outlines a systematic process to be followed by the individual in order to attain a specific employment goal within the shortest time frame that is practicable.

## **0810.05.10      Assessment Recording**

REV:01/2002

The agency representative enters the assessment information in the panels of the ASMT (Assessment) function of INRHODES. The first four ASMT panels comprise Level I Assessment. The ASMT function is used for both applicants and recipients; it should be periodically updated by

appropriate agency representatives after Intake to record new assessment information.

During the assessment, the FIP case worker annotates in the Level I Assessment Participant Profile screen whether the individual speaks English, and if not, the person's primary language. The Family Independence case worker also determines and annotates the marital status of the participant, whether or not s/he is a military veteran, current employment status, and the last grade of school completed.

After the FIP case worker reviews with the individual her/his family circumstances, including the needs of the individual's child(ren); the case worker enters for each family member, as appropriate, the school attended, as appropriate, and any current health problems.

The Level I Assessment Family Composition screen reproduces certain household member information from the participant's IV-A STAT (Statement of Need) in INRHODES. When an applicant is not known to INRHODES, there is no corresponding STAT, i.e., no member information to display; the next Assessment panel displayed is the participant Level I Assessment Education History screen. The Family Independence program worker must wait to enter information in the Family Composition panel until after the STAT is entered; however, s/he should record the appropriate information in the CNAR (Case Narrative) in the TOOL function of INRHODES.

In the Level I Assessment Education History screen, all educational facilities attended by the participant, program/course titles, and completion dates are entered; similarly, the worker lists in the Level I Assessment Employment History panel the names and addresses of the participant's previous employers, job titles, and hire and end dates.

A summary of the assessment interview with the participant and any appropriate information must be entered in the Case Narrative (CNAR).

There are two (2) levels of assessment: Level I and Level II.

Level I assessment is completed for all Family Independence program participants. Certain participants must undergo a Level II Assessment when required for specific components (e.g., Community Work Experience, Skills Training, and Post-secondary Education). Level II and/or literacy testing, as appropriate, may be determined necessary to establish reading, mathematics, and skill levels.

In Level II Assessment or to determine an individual's literacy level, a participant is referred by the agency representative for formal testing with a testing services provider. After the test results have been returned, the agency representative conducts an in-depth interview with the individual in which the results are discussed and evaluated in light of her/his previous education, training, and employment history. The focus of the interview is to gauge the overall likelihood of the completion and success in a given component/activity and whether achievement of the employment goal is realistically possible. The testing information is recorded in the Level II Assessment panel, i.e., the fifth panel of the ASMT function of INRHODES, and the results are filed in the case record. A summary of each contact with the

participant and any appropriate information is recorded in the CNAR (Case Narrative) in the TOOL function of INRHODES.

## **0810.10 FINANCIAL PLAN**

REV:05/1997

The financial plan shall identify all available sources of income and all benefits and services available to the family from state government, local government, from the federal government, and from social service agencies. Sources of income may include: earnings from employment, including self-employment, the earned income tax credit, advance payment of the earned income tax credit, social security, unemployment compensation, temporary disability insurance, supplemental security income assistance, and payment of support obligations by noncustodial parents.

Benefits may include: food stamps, school lunch, housing assistance, home heating assistance, as well as cash assistance under the Family Independence program.

The plan shall upon the family's request include an annual and monthly cash family budget detailing expenditures (required and possible in the view of these available resources) for food, clothing, shelter, utilities, work expenses (including child care and transportation), health care, personal care, and household supplies.

## **0810.15 EMPLOYMENT PLAN**

REV:01/2002

With the information gathered during the assessment interview along with the results of the educational testing the FIP Employment Plan is jointly developed by the applicant and the FIP social case worker.

The information on the C1(b) Form, is reviewed. If there are any medical limitations to participation in employment indicated, those limitations are considered in selecting the goals and activities that will be listed in the Employment Plan. The medical limitations may limit or exempt the applicant from employment activities.

The plan outlines a systematic process to be followed by the individual in order to attain a specific employment goal within the shortest practicable timeframe.

The Employment Plan must take into consideration the physical capacity, skills, education, including the results of the test measuring educational competencies, work experience, health and safety and family responsibilities, and place of residence of the individual; local employment opportunities; child care and supportive services required by and available to the applicant to avail himself or herself of employment opportunities and/or work readiness programs. The plan shall include a strategy for immediate employment and for preparing for, finding, and retaining employment consistent, to the extent practical, with the individual's career objectives.



In their discussion, the case worker and applicant identify barriers to employment; strategies and dates for resolving them are devised. If medical or other specific information is sought, a release of information Form, DHS-25 or DHS-25M, is signed by the parent authorizing the agency to obtain that information.

The FIP social case worker describes the programs and activities available to the parent. This information is obtained from current reports and publications from the Department of Labor and Training and other sources pertaining to training and employment.

The parent is also provided with information regarding the availability of supportive services that may include child care assistance and/or transportation assistance; the worker assists the family in obtaining those services needed to participate and authorizes them when appropriate and necessary.

The specific employment goal of the employment plan should be one that is feasible; the goal must be attainable in the shortest time period consistent with the parent's skills and interests as well as the months remaining in the parent's sixty (60) month lifetime time limit. Information about the available program resources must be discussed along with the parent's supportive service(s) needs, local employment opportunities, and to the maximum extent possible, the preferences of the parent.

~~An Employment Plan is developed by a FIP case worker in conjunction with each parent. The plan is derived from the employability assessment of the parent. The employment plan shall identify realistic short and long term career objectives.~~

~~—~~

~~It must take into consideration the physical capacity, skills, education, work experience, health and safety and family responsibilities, and place of residence of the individual; local employment opportunities; child care and supportive services required by and available to the applicant to avail himself or herself of employment opportunities and/or work readiness programs. The plan shall include a strategy for immediate employment and for preparing for, finding, and retaining employment consistent, to the extent practical, with the individual's career objectives. It must also take into consideration the sixty (60) month time limit for the parent's receipt of cash assistance from the Family Independence program.~~

~~The Family Services and Support/Employment Plan is established and signed at the end of the assessment. The plan is developed jointly by the FIP case worker and client who has a completed assessment. In their discussion, the case worker and client identify barriers to employment; strategies and dates for resolving them are then devised. If medical or other specific information is sought, a release of information form, DHS-25, is signed by the parent authorizing the agency to obtain that information.~~

~~—~~

~~The agency representative describes the programs and activities available to the parent. This information is obtained from current reports and publications from the Department of Labor and Training and other sources pertaining to training and employment.~~

~~—~~

~~The parent is also provided with information regarding the availability of supportive services; the worker assists the family in obtaining those services needed to participate and authorizes them when appropriate and necessary.~~

~~—~~

~~The specific employment goal of the employment plan should be one which is feasible; the goal must be attainable in the shortest time period consistent with the parent's skills level and interests as well as the months remaining in the parent's sixty (60) month lifetime time limit, available program resources, the parent's supportive service(s) needs, local employment opportunities, and to the maximum extent possible, the preferences of the parent.~~

~~All parents must be informed of their opportunity to attend education and/or training within the first twenty-four months of their employment plan. It is very important that this be understood by applicants as they make decisions about the nature of the activity that they will engage in. Applicants must also understand that beginning in the 25<sup>th</sup> month of their Employment Plan their approvable work activities will be limited to paid employment including on the job training, a community work experience, a Department approved training program conducted at a job site and a supervised job search not to exceed four consecutive or a total of six weeks in a twelve month period.~~

The worker records a summary of each contact or interview in the CNAR (Case Narrative) section of the TOOL function of INRHODES; if employer or component provider contacts are made telephonically, the dates and appropriate information obtained are recorded in the on-line Narrative as documentation.

Discrepancies in case information discovered during interviews and contacts must be forwarded to appropriate eligibility staff via the Information Transfer (D206) selection in the TOOL function of INRHODES.

~~After the completion of the Employment Plan the social case worker enters and maintains the employment activity schedule in INRHODES, It contains the details of each work/training activity, the beginning and anticipated end dates of each program/activity, and the scheduled days and hours of attendance, and authorization of supportive services.~~

~~The employment plan identifies the steps: education, job training, employment search, part-time work and full-time work that the recipient will follow to become financially self-sufficient within the shortest practicable time. In INRHODES, the employment activity schedule is entered and maintained; it contains the details of each work/training activity, the beginning and anticipated end dates of each program/activity, and the scheduled days and hours of attendance, and authorization of supportive services.~~

When the employment plan activity is a component activity with a specific time-limited program, the parent must obtain and provide written verification of acceptance into the program, as well as a program schedule before the employment activity schedule is finalized.

In order for an employment activity to be approved, the total scheduled hours of the component(s) must be in accordance with requirements as described in 1004.25.05.15 ~~twenty (20) or more hours per week unless the activity is~~ or participation on a full-time basis (as defined by

the institution) in an educational component activity as outlined in Sections 0812.10.05.

| The FIP social case worker lists in the employment activity schedule the supportive services determined necessary for participation and which are to be authorized.

The parent is advised of her/his responsibility to report within ten (10) days of any change in the family's circumstances as outlined in Section 0808.30. Whenever an employment plan contains an education or training component, the worker must explain to the parent the attendance requirements and the concept of "successful participation". Attendance of all the scheduled hours is required. Successful participation in an education or training activity means that the parent is meeting a consistent standard of progress toward the completion of the education or training activity. This standard must include a qualitative measure of progress such as a grade point average and a quantitative measure such as a reasonable time limit for completion of an education or training program. (See Section 0812.25.)

The completed employment activity schedule must be approved by the agency representative before any supportive services can be authorized. When a FIP case worker denies an individual's employment activity, a notice specifying the reasons for the denial must be issued. The notice must also include information regarding conciliation and the parent's appeal rights.